

Lexington Herald-Leader (KY)  
2009-02-22  
Section: OPINION IDEAS

### **Job training plan for all**

Give **all** willing students \$5,000 voucher to prepare **for** employment  
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Many of our leaders are banking on a "stimulus package" to jump-start the economy, promote employment and ease the burden of our working men and women. I suggest Kentucky begin a stimulus package of its own. **For** the past several decades, Kentucky's leaders have tried to lift our commonwealth from poverty, and most agree that education plays a key role in attracting **jobs** and preparing our young men and women **for** a lifetime of employment. This is portrayed by the establishment of the Cabinet status **for** Education and Workforce Development. My examination of the issues leads me to the following suggestion on how to best achieve the preparation of these young folks **for** employment and how to attract the actual **jobs** they may prepare **for**.

The answer is to prepare **all** of our students **for** further education, not just a higher education **for** some of them.

Each high school graduate should get a \$5,000 voucher **for** books, tuition and fees to any institution within Kentucky that can train them **for** employment, whether it be college, vocational school or workplace **training**.

This is not a bank account and cannot be spent on pizza, rent or beer. It is solely **for** the direct educational expenses meant to further train **all** of our graduates **for** future employment and gives them 10 years to use it.

It is a very precise stimulus **for** education and employment. We must get out of the narrow consideration of higher education **for** some of our children and expand it to consider further education **for all** of them. Our C and D students deserve the opportunity to be trained into employability, also.

This **plan** should inspire lots of students in many poorer counties to consider efforts to continue their education after high school, and it should attract many vocational schools and worker **training** programs to locate in Kentucky because it would be a target-rich environment **for** students to train, especially **for** new and emerging industries. Their books, tuition and fees are covered. This should be a big break **for** every parent with school-age children.

This is an economic/education stimulus package which will create **jobs** throughout the state. The beauty of it is that the money is only spent after each of the students makes an internal commitment to train **for** employability.

This is not money spent on some big building which may or may not attract students. It is a specific expenditure with immediate benefits and it **all** gets spent in Kentucky where taxes collected from the expenditures get returned to the state in the form of taxes.

Kentucky must consider new methods of **training** our work force and creating new **jobs**. This program achieves both aims and we can afford the cost by recommitting money which has been systematically stripped away from our educational budget.

**For** example, in 1991, 68 percent of the state's budget went to education. This year, it is less than 60 percent.

We must reverse this trend, and we must afford the cost or continue our status of poverty and illiteracy.

